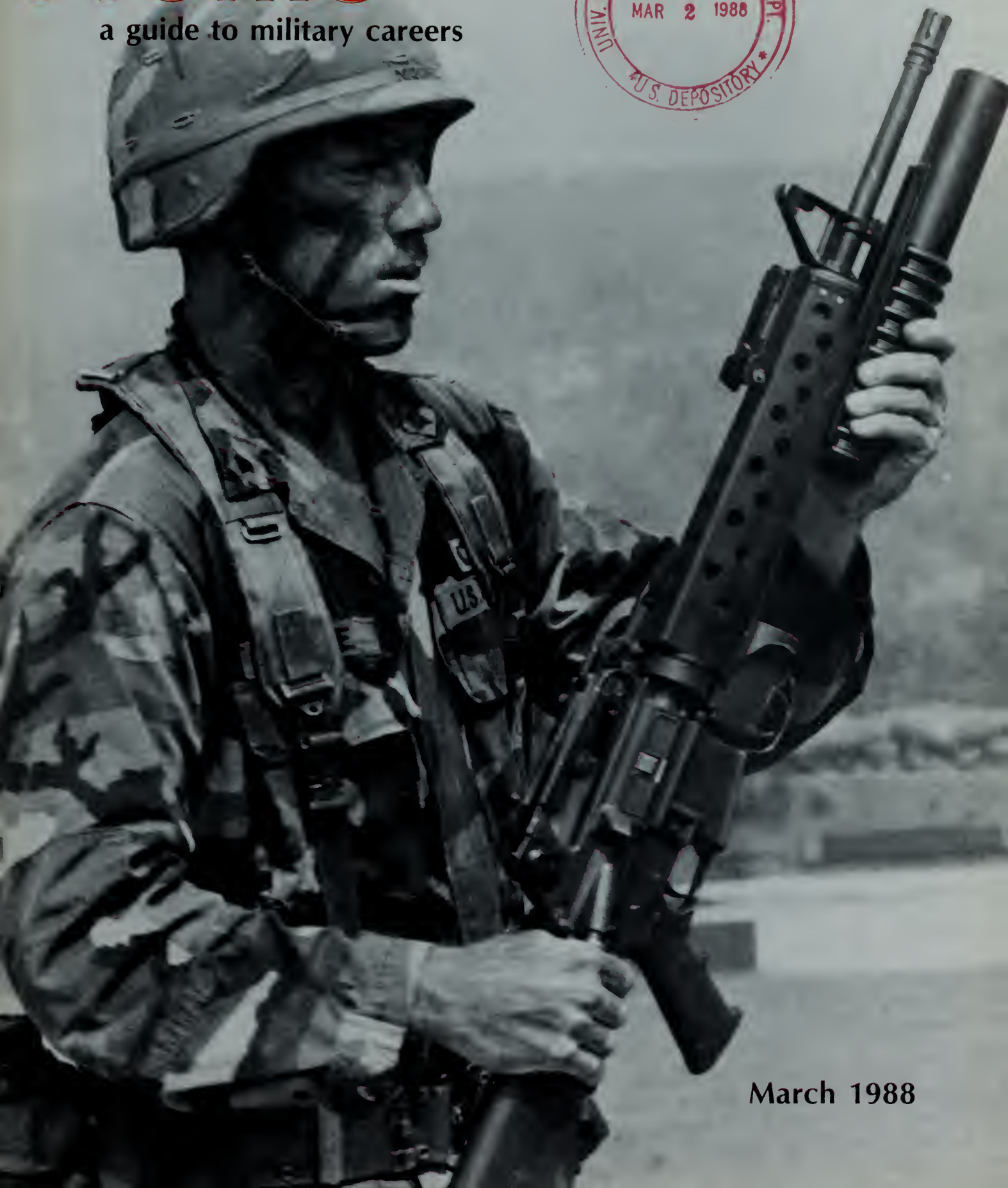
D 1.41 : 31/5

Profile

a guide to military careers

UNIV. OF FLA. LIB. * DOCUMENTS DEPT.
MAR 2 1988
* U.S. DEPOSITORY *



March 1988

PROFILE's April issue features a story about the Air Force bomb loaders. It also includes articles on Coast Guard radiomen, Navy musicians, Army veterinary specialists, and Marine Corps legal technicians.

Director
Capt. Charles E. Plaugher, USN

Deputy Director
Maj. Stephen W. Kerrick, USA

Managing Editor
Gunnery Sgt. John Black, USMC

Editors
Sgt. First Class
Karen Polston, USA
Staff Sgt. Linda Mitchell, USAF
Petty Officer Third Class
Dennis Tressic, USN

Circulation
Tech. Sgt. Gerry Johnson, USAF

PROFILE (USPS 457-490) is published monthly November through April by the High School News Service.

This magazine is designed to inform young people and guidance personnel about benefits, opportunities, privileges and programs of military service.

The Secretary of the Navy has determined that the publication of the periodical is necessary in the transaction of the public business required by law of this department. Use of funds for printing this publication were approved by the Office of Management and Budget, Dec. 2, 1980.

Reproduction of articles and supporting photographs is authorized provided proper credit is given.

Inquiries may be directed in writing to:

DOD High School News Service
PROFILE
Bldg. X-18
Norfolk, VA 23511-6698

Phone:
Commercial (804) 444-2828
AUTOVON564-2828

Third class circulation paid at Norfolk, Va. and at an additional mailing office at Philadelphia, PA.

Profile

a guide to military careers Vol. 31 No. 5 March 1988

4 Airborne!
7 Radarman
8 Interior Communications Electricians
10 Army Nurse Corps
12 Honor with Dignity
14 Electronic Testers
16 Life Preservers
18 Metal Magic
20 Philadelphia
22 Environmental Healers

About the covers

Front: An airborne soldier displays his grenade launcher during a weapons demonstration at Fort Bragg, N.C. (Photo by SFC Karen Polston)

Back: Sgt. Dian Smith of the U.S. Air Force Honor Guard inspects another member's uniform prior to participating in a ceremonial detail. (Photo by SSgt. Linda Mitchell)

A jump master checks over an airborne soldier's equipment prior to a flight. Each jumper is inspected thoroughly by the jump master to ensure safety standards are met.

Airborne!

Story and photos
by SFC Karen Polston

"Making an airborne jump is like being born again. After flying out to the drop zone on a crowded plane and being jostled around...going out that open door into nothing is a fantastic experience."

The airborne soldier paused, thinking about his last jump. "I can't explain it. If you haven't experienced it, you can't imagine the feeling."

For the 16,000 soldiers of the 82nd Airborne Corps at Fort Bragg, N.C., that feeling forms a mutual bond. As they pass each other on the street wearing their distinctive red berets, shouts of "AIRBORNE!" are called in greeting.

According to Maj. Gardner M. Nason, 82nd Airborne Corps public affairs officer, "Our intent is to airborne-qualify every member of the division. Even our cooks, mechanics and administrative clerks are airborne. We also have approximately 135 women assigned who are airborne qualified.

"However, no one is ordered to go airborne. Attending training and making jumps is strictly voluntary. But, I believe that the person who goes through the training and earns the airborne wings is a little tougher, tries a little harder, runs a little further, and is a little 'crazier' than the average person," Nason said. "That's what makes us special...our esprit de corps and team work."

Sgt. John Butler, an airborne Ranger with the 325th Airborne Infantry Regiment, explained, "Making a jump is safer than driving down Interstate 95. Safety is number one. Before each jump, every participant goes through a pre-jump safety briefing, no matter how many jumps they have completed.

"We review the proper procedures for exiting the aircraft, the correct landing positions, how to avoid mid-air collisions with other jumpers, and what to do if the chute malfunctions. There's only one solution to everything. When you're in the air, you don't think...you react," Butler said.

"The jump master (the person responsible for the jump) conducts the safety briefing. He also checks the aircraft, coordinates with the pilots and thoroughly checks each jumper's equipment," Butler explained.

Airborne training is conducted during a three-week course at Fort Benning, Ga. Students learn the basic techniques of exiting the aircraft, and practice jumping from a 34-foot tower with a mock-

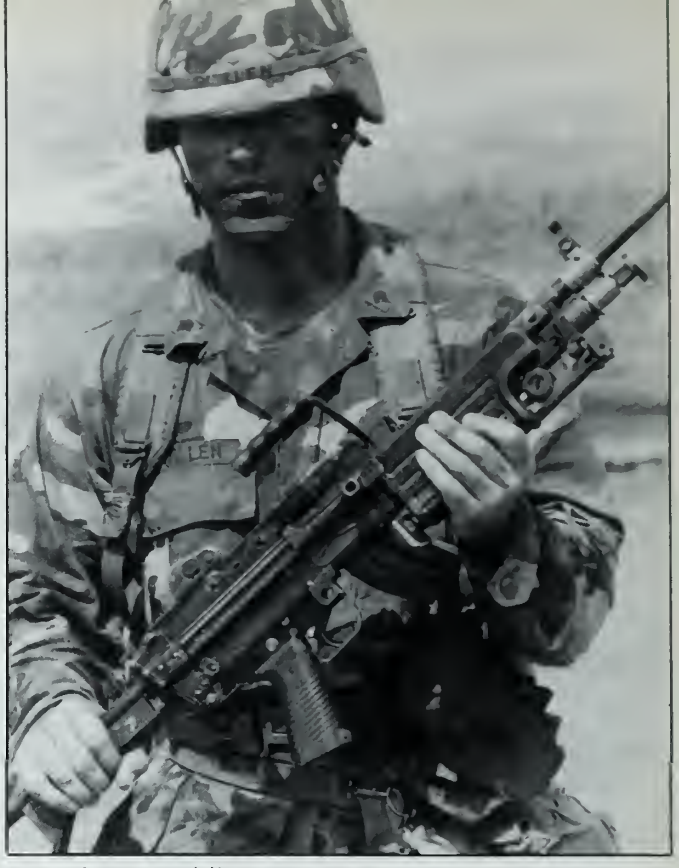
During a mass tactical jump, the parachutes of more than 650 airborne soldiers fill the sky.

up aircraft door. The next step, a jump from the 250-foot tower, helps the students practice the proper actions during descent and the correct parachute landing falls. During the final week of training, students make actual jumps.

"Training was extremely physical," Butler said. "We exercised constantly and ran from two to five miles daily to get into shape to make the jumps. When I made my first jump, I was nervous but confident in the training I had received. I knew I could do it."

To remain airborne qualified, a solder must make a jump every three months. "But we try to jump at least once or twice a month," Butler said. "Airborne qualified soldiers receive a monthly jump pay allowance (about $100) but the money isn't the incentive...it's making the jump that really counts.

"Today we're doing a mass tactical jump...with more than 650 people jumping. Everyone will be in the air for 31 seconds. There's nothing like it. As you step out of the aircraft door, the wind hits you in the face and you free fall for 3.2 seconds before the static line opens the chute," Butler concluded. "The feeling of drifting down to the earth is unbelievable. If you haven't tried it, you don't know what you're missing." ⬠



An airborne soldier participates in a weapons demonstration at Fort Bragg, N.C.

Airborne soldiers practice parachute landing falls from a platform to ensure they know the correct way to make contact with the ground without injury.

Two radarman students plot positions on a navigational chart during mock operations in the school's Combat Information Center.

Radarman

Story and photos by
JO3 Dennis Tressic

Icy winds whip sleet through the air. A blinding fog shrouds the Coast Guard cutter as it navigates the narrow channel searching for a suspected drug runner. Blinking lights on radar screens indicate where the drug runners' boat and other possible hazards are located.

"Radarmen operate the radar systems and keep the ship's bridge and the captain informed of objects on, under, and above the water," stated Senior Chief Petty Officer David Bunch.

"Besides assisting the bridge in navigating, radarmen monitor onboard radar systems used for tracking suspected drug runners' boats and for creating search patterns to locate people who are lost at sea," stated Bunch.

"This tracking information is gathered in the Combat Information Center (CIC), where radarmen continuously monitor the equipment," continued Bunch. "This information is electronically gathered, evaluated, and passed to the bridge for further evaluation."

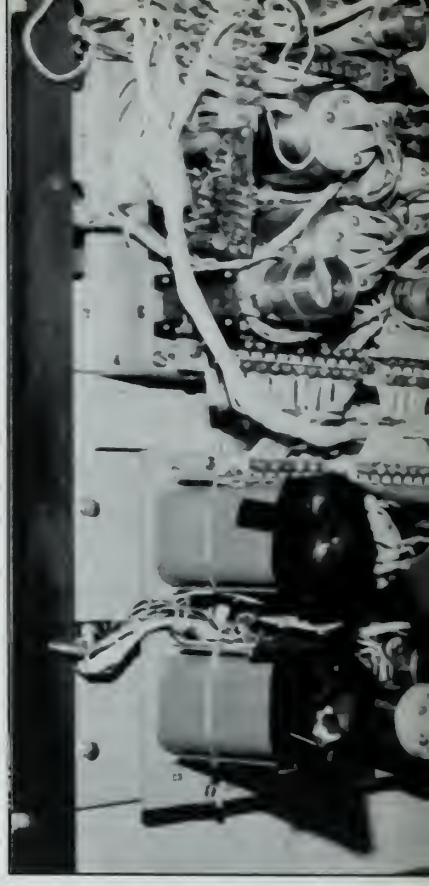
"Radarmen plot contact blips on their screens, control aircraft, assist the quartermasters in navigating, collect and maintain intelligence information, and use voice communication equipment," said Bunch.

Radarmen learn how to run a ship's CIC by attending the 12-week radarman "A" school, located at the Coast Guard Reserve Training Center, Yorktown, Va.

"Students learn the many different areas of the CIC by working with others as a team during hands-on training in a mock CIC," explained Bunch.

Students also learn that strong concentration is a must in this rate, especially when contact blips could indicate possible dangers. Radarmen use all gathered information to assist the ship's crew, whether it's helping to safely navigate fog-shrouded channels, locate drug runners or locate people lost at sea. ⬠

Interior Communication Electricians



Petty Officer 1st Class Brad Molek takes resistance readings on a target plot attachment of a plotting system.

Story and photos by JO3 Dennis Tressic

In the middle of a humid black night, steaming towards their assigned training objective, U.S. Navy vessels were within hours of launching an attack against their assigned targets.

Aboard the aircraft carrier USS Coral Sea, pilots were being briefed by means of the ships' Closed Circuit Television system (CCTV), prior to the start of their training mission.

Suddenly, the CCTV stopped working.

Immediately, an emergency service call was made to the ships' Interior Communication Electricians' shop to locate the problem and repair the CCTV equipment.

With critical minutes ticking away, the electricians replaced a defective power supply, and the CCTV system was back in operation. The pilots finished their brief and went on to successfully complete their mission.

"The CCTV system is our number one maintenance priority," said Petty Office 3rd Class Doug Payne, an interior communication electrician (IC) in the TV repair shop aboard the Coral Sea. "When any part of the system malfunctions, we are quickly on top of the situation.

"The CCTV system is similar to another important system we have on board called the Ships' Information, Training and Entertainment system (SITE). Also closed circuit, the SITE system is similar to regular public television and radio, the main difference being that, only Navy-related information is broadcast in place of commercials."

In addition to servicing the TV systems on board, interior communication electricians also are respon-

Petty Officer 1st Class Walter Williams takes resistance readings while troubleshooting a plotting system.

sible for maintaining the ships' public address systems; its telephone and telegraph systems; wind indicating equipment; gyrocompasses and ship course indicators.

People entering the interior communication electrician rate learn their trade by attending the 22-week interior communication technician "A" school located at the Naval Training Center, San Diego.

"Students are taught the theories of electricity, electronics and amplifiers, and hands-on training in operating and repairing various pieces of electrical equipment," stated Master Chief John Borio, director of the IC "A" school.

The intense training and education received by ICs enables them to meet the interior communication needs of their unit. Whether that need is fixing a CCTV for waiting pilots, or repairing the SITE equipment for crewmen to watch a movie, ICs are always on call and are ready to respond.

Chief Petty Officer Richard Whittaker points out certain components on a power supply card of a Dead Reckoning Analyzer Indicator.

An Army nurse visits with a new mother and her baby. Pediatrics and obstetrics are two of the clinical specialties open to Army nurses.

Army Nurses

by SFC Karen Polston

They are part of the Army Health Care Team, serving in eight countries and on five continents. They help care for the more than three million men and women of the Army and their families.

They are the members of the Army Nurse Corps.

The standards are high, according to Maj. Brenda J. Wedge, chief of nursing education and staff development at McDonald Army Community Hospital, Fort Eustis, Va.

"Applicants need a minimum of a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from an accredited college or university. They must also be currently registered to practice nursing in the United States or Puerto Rico," she explained. "Applicants can apply for a direct commission through an Army nurse recruiter or they can join through the ROTC programs available at universities."

Army nurses go through a five-and-a-half week Officer Basic Orientation Course given at the Academy of Health Sciences at Fort Sam Houston, in San Antonio, Texas. The new officers attend lectures, conferences, films and demonstrations which cover everything from military customs to management of mass casualties. Participants also spend a few days in a simulated combat area to prepare for operating in that environment.

"That's an important consideration," Wedge explained, "because although we're nurses, we're also soldiers. We have to meet our military obligations in addition to our nursing duties. However, along with the responsibilities, there are professional and personal opportunities.

"The educational opportunities in Army nursing are second to none," said Wedge. "Nurses can apply for clinical specialty courses such as intensive care, operating room nursing, community health and environmental science, psychiatric mental health nursing, obstetrical and gynecological nursing, pediatric nursing, and anesthesiology. A nurse midwifery course is also available.

"Additionally, there's a graduate degree program nurses may apply to attend. If accepted, they can receive all their tuition, pay and allowances while attending a civilian university full time," Wedge explained. "Most of the advanced speciality courses and degree programs do require an additional service obligation.

"Travel is another exciting aspect for Army nurses," she said. "Having the chance to travel to a variety of locations and climates around the world gives the Army nurse an opportunity to work with a range of cases that most nurses only read about in textbooks, such as tropical diseases in Panama or frostbite incidents in Alaska.

"Being part of the Army health care team is a big responsibility, both as a nurse and a soldier. Accepting a commission into the Army Nurse Corps requires a commitment to a new way of life," Wedge concluded. "But the training, experience and opportunities available to Army nurses can't be beat." ⬠

An operating room nurse assists the surgeon during a procedure.

Honor With Dignity

Story and photos by SSgt. Linda Mitchell

The strains of "Taps" echo softly across Arlington National Cemetery near Washington, D.C. As the music floats through the air, six airmen fold the U.S. flag which had draped the casket of a former U.S. Air Force member. The flag is presented to family members, as six more airmen fire a three-volley rifle salute.

Their motto is "To Honor With Dignity", and the 150-member U.S. Air Force Honor Guard live up to this motto every day.

Besides bearing the caskets of fallen military comrades, they carry the nation's flag during White House Presidential ceremonies. As members of the Military District of Washington Joint Service Honor Guard, the Ceremonial Flight and Drill Team participate in wreath-laying ceremonies at the Tomb of the Unknowns at Arlington, and they march in inaugural parades. The 25-member Drill Team exhibits a variety of drill routines using 13-pound ceremonial weapons. These demonstrations can be viewed at the Jefferson and Lincoln Memorials, and at other locations in the District of Columbia and across the United States and Canada.

"Through it all," said 1st Lt. Pete Benton, Officer in Charge of Ceremonial Flight, "these men and women perform with a maturity beyond their years."

About 90 percent of the Honor Guard candidates are fully qualified law enforcement and security specialists selected during Security Police technical school training at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas. After graduation from Security Police school, they are assigned to the U.S. Air Force Honor Guard at Bolling Air Force Base, D.C. There, they undergo six to eight weeks' further instruction in the Honor Guard's Training Flight.

"Training Flight introduces the new members to ceremonial techniques including all marching and weapon-firing maneuvers and the proper way to carry a casket and the colors (flags)," said Staff Sgt. Walter Payne, an instructor. "They also learn how to put raz r-sharp creases in uniforms and polish shoes to a mirror image."

Potential members must meet several standards prior to selection. The minimum height required for men is five feet 10 inches, while women five feet six inches and above may join. All members must be in excellent physical condition with good physical coordination. Vision must be correctable to 20/40 in

Opposite page: Dress blues inspection.
Above: The U.S. Air Force Honor Guard emblem.
Top right: Marching maneuvers.
Right: Rendering final honors.

both eyes using only contact lenses or reading glasses.

Honor Guard candidates must also qualify for a Presidential Support security clearance, which involves an extensive personal background investigation.

"Whether we're bearing the colors during a joint service Pentagon function, or standing at attention next to the president, the way the public views us is how they view the entire Air Force," Benton said. "That's a big responsibility for the Honor Guard to carry, but these men and women continually live up to our motto 'To Honor With Dignity.' "⬠

Electronics Testers

Story and photos by SSgt. Linda Mitchell

It began as a routine flight. One of the F-15 Eagle's engines had recently been overhauled, and the pilot had taken the plane up for a test flight. The plane was scheduled for extensive flying during the upcoming exercise, and the pilot wanted to make sure all systems were functioning properly.

During the flight, the pilot noticed some breakup in the radio transmissions between him and the air traffic controllers. The pilot made a mental note to have the maintenance crew check the system upon his return.

Electronic components include navigation, radar, electronic warfare and weapons system computers.

During the after-flight inspection, the aircraft's maintenance crew chief had the radio system "pulled" and sent to the avionics (aviation electronics) shop for repairs.

Staff Sergeants Harvell (left) and Miller make adjustments to an F-15 heads-up display navigational component.

Staff Sergeants Harvell and Miller prepare to run a diagnostic check using the microwave test station.

"We perform maintenance and tests on all aircraft electronic components, including navigation and radar computers, antennas, electronic warfare and weapons systems computers," said Staff Sgt. Terry Harvell, an avionics test station technician in the 1st Component Repair Squadron (CRS) at Langley Air Force Base, Va. "Each system is a separate box, called a Line Replaceable Unit (LRU). The maintenance crew can pull out the defective LRU and replace it on the flightline."

"After determining which component within the electronic system isn't functioning, the maintenance person prepares a history card, including the unit's name, serial number, what's wrong and notes if it's a recurring problem," said Staff Sgt. Ramon Miller, an avionics test station technician in the 1st CRS shop.

Avionics test station specialists interface (plug in) the LRU to a test station computer. Simulating the aircraft in flight, the test station computer takes the unit through its aircraft procedures. The computer isolates the problem and informs the specialists what needs to be done to repair the problem.

Test station drawers contain equipment needed to simulate aircraft functions.

"Each test station has several drawers," Harvell said. "Each drawer has a different type of meter, signal switching unit or power supply. Drawers also include frequency meters, digital multimeters, wave form spectrum analyzers, voltage meters, or any other test function which simulates aircraft function," Harvell explained.

These meters and power supplies isolate the problem to such areas as the LRU's memory, power supply, data and signal transferring components, and its multitude of wires, connectors, circuit cards and pins. The isolated component is removed, replaced and retested before the LRU is returned to the maintenance squadron.

The knowledge to operate this wide variety of test equipment is learned in the five-month basic electronics school at Lowry Air Force Base, Colo. Electronic principles, including how to read meters and how to troubleshoot simple electronic circuits, are taught, along with the set up of each test station.

They learn to work on F-111s, F-16s, B-1Bs, and A-10s as well as the F-15s.

Avionics test station personnel learn to work on aircraft electronics systems for F-111, F-16 Fighting Falcon, B-1B and A-10 Thunderbolt aircraft in addition to those on the Eagle because of the similarities in the electronic systems. During on-the-job training at each assignment, they specialize on one aircraft.

"Normally, we can repair, retest and recertify a component in a short time," Miller said. "This ensures a constant state of readiness for the flying squadrons." ⬠

Life Preservers

by SSgt. Linda Mitchell

Few people make a habit of jumping from airplanes or boats. Most frequent flyers remain securely belted in their seats until the plane's wheels touch the ground, while boaters rely on their ship to reach the pier safely.

Military aircrews, special forces and ships' crews, however, are often required to leave the comforts of the airplane or ship, whether during emergencies or practice exercises. They all rely on special equipment, including parachutes, flight suits, life rafts and vests, and survival kits for protection.

"The crews' lives are in our hands,"said Air Force Sgt. Ed Engel, a fabrication and parachute specialist in the 354th Equipment Maintenance Squadron, Myrtle Beach Air Force Base, S.C.

Before a plane takes off, and while a ship is at sea, survival equipment repair experts make sure the equipment is always ready for use.

"We repair and repack personnel main and reserve parachutes, as well as the drogue chute attached to the ejection seat in the aircraft," Engel said. "We also maintain the drag chutes used by

A Coast Guard rescue-swimmer is lifted out of the water. (Photo by Seaman Bill Smith)

Petty Officer Horrigan checks an aircrew member's helmet communication system. (Photo by SSgt. Linda Mitchell)

aircraft during fast-braking maneuvers."

In addition to personnel parachutes, Army parachute riggers repair and repack the large High Altitude, Low Opening (HALO) parachutes used by Special Forces. They also work on the Low Altitude Parachute Extraction System (LAPES), which is used to lower pallets of cargo during air drops. "Attaching the parachute is the last part of the job for us," said Spec. 4 William D. Booker, a parachute rigger in the 600th Quartermaster Company, Ft. Bragg, N.C. "We also load the equipment on the pallets." Army riggers have an extra incentive to do the repair and repacking job right--as airborne personnel, they are often required to use them. Booker added that the remainder of Army survival equipment is stored and maintained by Supply and Service personnel.

Repairs include sewing patches of similar material over holes in the parachutes. The men and women also check the suspension lines for wear and tear and replace broken or worn lines. Repacking the chutes is a lengthy process, because they must ensure that the lines are straight and untwisted and that the silk is smooth and not caught in the lines.

When it's necessary to leave the plane or boat far from the nearest shore, one-to 20-man life rafts and personal life vests are necessities. "During periodic preventive maintenance checks, we inspect life rafts and vests for cuts, holes and rips in the seams," Engel said.

"Additionally, we check for leaks which may not be obvious to the eyes. After repairs are made," he explained, "we inflate the rafts and vests for up to six hours, periodically checking them for temperature, humidity and air pressure. If everything is all right at the end of the test period, we deflate the item and pack it for rotation back to the aircraft or life support units in the flying squadrons." Periodic inspections ensure the larger life rafts and all life vests contain survival necessities, including rations, emergency radios, flares and other signaling devices.

"We mend exposure suits which protect aircrews against hypothermia in the cold air or water, and we make sure aircrew helmet radios and oxygen masks operate properly," said Petty Officer 2nd Class Pat Horrigan, an aviation survivalman in Helicopter Anti-Submarine Squadron Light (HSL) 30, Norfolk Naval Air Station, Va.

In addition to making the aircrews' form-fitted helmets, Horrigan and other aviation survivalmen in the Navy and Coast Guard ensure rescue equipment, including stokes litters, nets and slings are ready for every search and rescue mission.

Schools for the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force and Coast Guard vary in number and course length. Depending on the service, jump school, water and land survival training may be required in addition to learning basic sewing, inspection and packing techniques. For example, while Army para chute riggers attend Army Jump School at Ft. Benning, Ga., Navy and Coast Guard rescue personnel attend their service's rescue-swimmer schools.

On-the-job training is closely supervised until the fabrication/survival equipmentmen know their job inside and out. They realize that they provide the aircrews and ships' crews with possibly the last chance of survival.

With sparks flying, Cpl. Cannon makes the cut in the metal.

Metal Magic

Story and photos
by SFC Karen Polston

Sparks flew as the flame bit through the metal. The welder carefully cut along the marks he'd measured exactly. The finished product would be a steel grate that would provide additional security for a window.

"Most of the work I do here is for security," said Cpl. Jonathan A. Cannon, a Marine welder at Marine Corps Base Camp Elmore, Norfolk, Va. "I weld grates for windows, strengthen locks and doors, and install safes. I also perform maintenance and repairs on base structures. Since I'm presently the only welder at Camp Elmore, my work schedule keeps me busy.

Using pliers to hold the metal, Cpl. Cannon knocks off the excess to make the surface smoother.

"While I was stationed at Camp Pendleton, Calif., I worked in the vehicle repair shop, doing body work. Where a welder is stationed has a lot to do with the job that Marine will perform," Cannon explained.

"I also spend time out in the field as part of the brigade service support group," Cannon said. "In addition to welding projects when I'm in the field, I may also help the electricians or the carpenters. I help out wherever I'm needed."

Marine Corps welders learn their skills during a 2 1/2-month course at Camp Lejeune, N.C. "During the school, we're taught the principles of acetylene and arc welding," Cannon said.

"Acetylene welding is the use of gasses to create a flame that is hot enough to melt the metal. Arc welding is fusion welding where the heat is supplied by an electric arc," Cannon said.

"One of the projects we had to complete during our training involved cutting a metal plate in half and then welding it back together. The finished plate was pressure tested and if the weld withstood the force, we passed that portion of the course," he said.

"In addition to learning welding techniques, we're also taught how to operate and maintain the M-62 diesel engine that is used for arc welding.

"Men and women may come straight out of basic training and go to the welding school, or they may receive on-the-job training prior to being sent to school," Cannon said.

Marine welders have the opportunity to attend the 2 1/2-month advanced journeyman training also held at Camp Lejeune. During this course, students supplement the training they received during the basic welding course.

He fired up the flame and sparks began to fly again. After cutting out a small piece of metal to be used on the window bars, he knocked off the rough edges and marked the spot where it would be joined on the main structure.

"I'm always working on something different. When I finish this job, I have to work up plans for installing a wall safe," Cannon concluded. "I enjoy the challenge, and the experience I'm getting is great." ⬠

Philadelphia

The Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States were adopted here at Independence Hall.
Photo courtesy of Philadelphia Convention and Visitors Bureau

Story by
JO3 Dennis Tressic

Philadelphia..."The City of Brotherly Love." It's where our nation began to blossom. It's a city of firsts--it saw the birth of independence, it witnessed the writing of the laws we live by, and it was the site of the first daily newspaper. It's a city bursting with history.

The Declaration of Independence was one of these firsts. In response to the colonial citizens' cries to "Let Freedom Ring," Thomas Jefferson wrote this document, which was adopted by the

Second Continental Congress in 1776. Eleven years later, the Constitution of the United States was written in Independence Hall. This building houses copies of these two documents, and is open daily for public viewing.

Other historical places of interest include the Franklin Court which contains a museum, theater, printing office, and post office. Some famous residents of Philadelphia have included Betsy Ross and Edgar Allen Poe, whose homes are open to the public. Also open to visitors is the Liberty Bell pavilion located across the street from Independence Hall. At Penn's Landing, tourists can board and see Admiral Dewey's flag ship, U.S.S. Olympia and the U.S. World War II submarine Becuna.

The modern military is represented by the Philadelphia Naval Station and Ship Yard. Other military bases in the surrounding area include the Willow Grove Naval Air Station, McGuire Air Force Base, the Army's Frankfort Arsenal and Fort Dix.

Military members can enjoy all the pleasurable sites Philadelphia has to offer, such as its theater, concerts, museums and historical parks. Shopping, riding the trolley cars and touring the city on English style double-deck buses are additional options to consider.

Philadelphia offers the sports enthusiast a wide variety of college and professional sports ranging from Philadelphia 76ers basketball and Phillies baseball to the Flyers ice hockey teams.

Recreation is limitless. Biking and hiking, boating and fishing, horseback riding and picnicking are just a few suggestions for relaxation.

The countless opportunities of this city of firsts offers people a chance to see many historic buildings and sites. It's a place where our nation's heritage continues, it seems, to respond to the colonial citizen's cries to, "LET FREEDOM RING!" ⬠

The Liberty Bell serves as a strong symbol of freedom throughout the world.

The USS Olympia and U.S. submarine Becuna are docked at Penn's Landing where people can board and see them.

Environmental Healers

Story and photos by SSgt. Linda Mitchell

Kids constantly devise ways to annoy their mothers. The favorite, time-tested method is collecting creatures. Everything from stray dogs and cats to garter snakes, turtles, bugs and frogs have found their way into youngsters' pockets and rooms.

Sometimes this collecting craze can lead to scientific careers, such as collecting and studying mosquitos as part of a disease control effort to keep people healthy. This is just one of the many jobs performed by Air Force environmental health (EH) specialists.

"Actually, everything we do is designed to keep people healthy," said Senior Airman Jeff Crickenberger, an EH specialist in the 1st Medical Group at Langley Air Force Base, Va. "Collecting disease-transmitting insects for study is just a small part of our job."

Environmental health specialists also assist in capturing unlicensed dogs and cats to isolate rabies-infected animals from the rest of the population. "If someone on base is bitten by a stray animal, they report it to us. If the animal is captured, it's brought to the veterinary clinic for rabies testing," Crickenberger said, "and we record and monitor the reported rabies cases."

The EH specialists in the environmental medicine section also monitor hospital employee health programs. "Hospital employees work with patients suffering from communicable diseases, such as German measles, hepatitis and tuberculosis," Crickenberger explained. "We review employee health and shot records periodically to make sure employees are properly immunized."

In addition, EH specialists record and monitor outbreaks of communicable diseases occurring on base, and send the statistics to the Center for Disease Control in Atlanta, Ga.

Occupational health programs are part of the job for environmental health specialists. They inspect industrial shops to make sure shop personnel comply with Air Force and base regulations regarding occupational safety. These programs are particularly important in hazardous areas, such as on the flightline or in shops where dangerous chemicals are used.

"**We** educate people about the potential hazards of their jobs," Crickenberger said. "For example, flightline personnel must be made aware of the dangers of noise pollution and how to prevent hearing loss by wearing ear protection devices. Others must be taught the proper use of respiratory equipment to protect their lungs from fuel, paint and chemical fumes."

Another part of the EH specialists' job involves performing inspections in food service and public areas on base. "We thoroughly examine all food facilities, including the commissary, dining halls, clubs and cafeterias to ensure that these facilities are rodent- and bug-free.

"Additionally, we evaluate food handler hygiene, and we inspect sanitary conditions of public facilities and areas, and food delivery trucks. We check all food for freshness, particularly dairy products, to ensure they're within their 'use by' dates. We also make sure that the food is stored and cooked at the proper temperatures to prevent food poisoning," Crickenberger continued.

"**Public** facilities include child care centers," he added. "In addition to the food and facilities inspection, we check each child's immunization and health record to ensure the facility remains free of communicable diseases. If we find potential health, fire or safety hazards, we report them to the proper authorities, then follow up on the reports to make sure the hazards have been quarantined or removed."

Environmental health specialists attend a 12-week course at the School of Aerospace Medicine, Brooks Air Force Base, Texas. The first half of the course covers all aspects of food inspections, including how to spot indications of poor food storage. The final part of the course includes training in conducting facility inspections, instructing occupational health and safety classes and all other aspects of the job.

When adding to their collections, children don't think about their health. Snakes are all the same to them, whether poisonous or not. Environmental health specialists, however, have acquired a "healthy respect" for these and other life-threatening hazards, and they make sure everyone associated with the military acquires it.

Senior Airman Crickenberger checks equipment for cleanliness during an inspection.

☆ U S GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 1988 526-025/61005

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA
3 1262 09683 0566

U.S. Air Force Honor Guard--
page 12

Winning isn't everything, but wanting to win is.

Vince Lombardi

BULK RATE
POSTAGE FEES PAID
DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
PERMIT NO G-9

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
Department of Defense
High School News Service
Bldg. X-18, Naval Station
Norfolk, Virginia 23511-6698

OFFICIAL BUSINESS
Penalty for Private Use, $300